

CHAPTER 1. GENERAL

PART 1. DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY SYSTEM

1. Scope. The GSA Delegations of Authority Manual contains official, approved GSA internal delegations of authority from the Administrator to Executives in the Office of the Administrator, to the Heads of Services and Staff Offices, and to the Regional Administrators.
2. Applicability. The provisions of this Manual apply to all organizational elements of GSA in the Central Office and Regional Offices. For purposes of this Manual:
 - a. Executives in the Office of the Administrator shall mean the Deputy Administrator, the Senior Counselor to the Administrator, and the Chief of Staff.
 - b. Heads of Services shall mean the Commissioner of the Public Buildings Service and the Commissioner of the Federal Acquisition Service.
 - c. Heads of Staff Offices shall mean the Chief Financial Officer; Chief Information Officer; Chief People Officer ; General Counsel; Inspector General; Chairperson, Civilian Board of Contract Appeals; Associate Administrator for Governmentwide Policy; Associate Administrator for Congressional and Intergovernmental Affairs; Associate Administrator for Citizen Services and Innovative Technologies; Associate Administrator for Communications and Marketing; Associate Administrator for Civil Rights; Associate Administrator for Small Business Utilization; Chief Emergency Response and Recovery Officer, and the Chief Administrative Services Officer.
 - d. GSA's Senior Procurement Executive is the Deputy Associate Administrator, Office of Governmentwide Policy.
3. Basic policy. It is the policy of the Administrator that, to the fullest extent practicable, authority to act will be delegated to officials having responsibility for the actual performance of operations.
4. Relationship to the GSA-wide Contracting Officer Warrant Program. This Manual delegates authorities for conducting certain contracting activities within the agency. While the Manual may delegate these authorities to specific positions, the exercise of those authorities by any given individual is subject to the requirements of the Contracting Officer Warrant Program (COWP). Under that program, no GSA official may obligate the Government under a contract, delivery order, purchase order, lease, or sale unless he or she has been designated as a contracting officer by the Administrator or GSA's Senior Procurement Executive, or has otherwise been exempted from COWP coverage.
5. Exercise of authority during absence or disability. Any officer or employee authorized and directed to act for an officer or employee delegated authority hereunder may exercise the authority of the absent or disabled officer or employee, subject to the limitations that may be imposed.
6. Delegation of authority system.
 - a. Authority of the Administrator. All authority lodged in GSA is vested in the Administrator of General Services except those authorities vested in the Civilian Board of Contract Appeals by the Contract Disputes Act, 41 U.S.C. 7101-7109, and to the Inspector General provided by the Inspector General Act of 1978, (5 U.S.C. App. 3), as amended. Nothing in this delegation is intended to limit those independent authorities. The Administrator is authorized to delegate and to authorize successive redelegation of any authority transferred to or vested in the Administrator by Title 40 U.S.C. – Federal Property and Administrative Services, to any official of GSA except (1) the authority to issue regulations on matters of policy having application to executive agencies; (2) the authority to regroup, transfer, and distribute functions within GSA; and (3) as otherwise provided in statute.
 - b. Delegation and redelegation. The Administrator has established specific organization channels for the delegation and redelegation of authorities within GSA. Through these channels, the Administrator delegates authorities directly to Executives in the Administrator's Office, to Heads of Services and Staff

Offices, and to Regional Administrators. Each of these officials in turn re-delegates authority down to the final point of exercise to officials reporting to them and, in the case of FAS and PBS to their respective Regional Commissioners, except where specifically precluded by the delegation from the Administrator, and each establishes such administrative limitation on the exercise of delegated authority as may be determined to be in the best interest of GSA.

c. Restrictions. Only Executives in the Administrator's Office and Heads of Services and Staff Offices and Regional Administrators are authorized to redelegate authority. All delegations and re delegations of authority within GSA must be shown in this manual or in an appropriate internal directive in the 5450 series. Delegations relating to contracting may be further restricted under the GSA-wide Contracting Officer Warrant Program (COWP). Except for designations under the COWP, letter and informal communications shall not be used for the dissemination of permanent delegations of authority or limitations and restrictions thereto. However, this does not preclude managers from placing temporary administrative limitations on subordinates when directed by management judgment.

d. Exceptions. The Administrator may, on a case-by-case basis, authorize exceptions to b, above, and may authorize the Head of a Service or Staff Office to redelegate authorities directly to each other or to the Regional Administrators. Authorized exceptions are:

(1) GSA's Commissioners are authorized to delegate technical and program authority for their respective services to the Regional Commissioners;

(2) GSA's Deputy Associate Administrator/Senior Procurement Executive, is authorized to redelegate, within GSA, acquisition authorities; and

(3) The Chief Financial Officer is authorized to redelegate financial management authorities pursuant to the Chief Financial Officers Act of 1990.

7. General provisions relating to all delegations of authority.

a. Observance of laws, regulations, program directions, and instructions. Any authority delegated to Executives in the Administrator's Office, to the Heads of Services and Staff Offices, and to the Regional Administrators must be exercised under such applicable laws and regulations and such program directives and instructions as are in effect on the date of the exercise of this authority. In the event of an emergency and their inability to communicate with the Administrator, Deputy Administrator, Senior Counselor, Chief of Staff or other Executives in the Administrator's Office, these officials are authorized, without prior approval of the Administrator, to take actions necessary for the safety and protection of persons and property under GSA control.

b. Discretion and judgment. Executives in the Administrator's Office, Heads of Services and Staff Offices, and Regional Administrators shall exercise discretion and judgment regarding specific transactions, coordinate with one another, as appropriate, on items that are sensitive or controversial, and refer to the Administrator for approval only those actions determined suitable for his or her consideration.

8. Delegations of authority directives and their contents.

a. GSA Delegations of Authority Manual (ADM P 5450.D). The Manual is organized as follows:

(1) Ch. 1 describes the GSA delegation of authority system, clearance requirements and responsibilities, and distribution requirements.

(2) Ch. 2 contains delegations of human capital and common authorities, from the Administrator to Executives in the Administrator's Office, the Heads of Services and Staff Offices, and the Regional Administrators.

(3) Ch. 3 contains delegations of authorities from the Administrator to Executives in the Administrator's Office.

(4) Chs. 4 thru 19 contains delegations of authorities from the Administrator to specific Heads of Services and Staff Offices. Some chapters are marked reserve due to changes in GSA's organization structure.

(5) Ch. 20 contains delegations of authorities from the Administrator to the Regional Administrators.

a. GSA orders in the ADM 5450 series. These orders are issued by the Administrator to expeditiously announce revised delegations of authority to the Executives in the Administrator's Office, the Heads of Services and Staff Offices and the Regional Administrators. These orders must be incorporated into this Manual.

b. Redelegations of authority handbooks and orders. These directives are issued in the 5450 series by the Heads of Services and Staff Offices to redelegate the authorities in the Manual and other directives to program officials and by Regional Administrators to redelegate authorities to regional officials. These orders must be published as part of the appropriate chapter of this Manual.

PART 2. CLEARANCE REQUIREMENTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

9. Changes to the GSA Delegations of Authority Manual and ADM 5450 orders.

a. Changes to this Manual are typically needed when there is a

- new Law
- change in rules/regulations/directive
- new Executive Order
- change in business process
- change in GSA organization structure
- change in GSA organization titles
- change in functions

b. Each organization in GSA is responsible for monitoring any changes as listed above, or otherwise needed, to ensure that appropriate delegations are put in place immediately after a change. The Office of Congressional Affairs (OCIA) can assist with changes due to new laws; the Office of Human Resources Management (OHRM) can assist with changes needed as result of organizational changes in GSA. Changes to the Manual are developed by Executives in the Administrator's Office, Heads of Services or Staff Offices, or Regional Administrators, submitted to the OHRM, cleared by the Office of General Counsel (OGC), and issued by the Administrator.

c. Each proposed change must consist of a transmittal letter and the proposed GSA order. The transmittal letter must contain sufficient information to evaluate the proposal, including a clear description of the proposed change, background for the change, and complete justification for the change.

d. The OHRM evaluates proposed delegations in conjunction with the OGC for conformance with laws, regulations, instructions, organizational soundness, and agency policy and coordinates proposals with other Heads of Services and Staff Offices and Regional Administrators, as appropriate. In addition, all proposals involving procurement authorities are coordinated with GSA's Senior Procurement Executive, Office of Governmentwide Policy.

e. Upon completion of its review, OHRM forwards the proposed change to the Administrator, through the appropriate officials, and recommends its approval or disapproval.

10. Redelegations of authority handbooks or orders.

a. In the Central Office, these directives are developed and issued by the Heads of Services or Staff Offices and cleared with the appropriate Associate General Counsel and other interested program officials. Those directives must be published in this manual.

b. In the regions, these directives are developed and issued by the Regional Administrators and cleared with the Regional Counsel, other regional officials, and the appropriate Central Office Head of Service or Staff Office. Those directives must be published as parts in the Regional Administrators' Chapter of this manual.

PART 3. DISTRIBUTION REQUIREMENTS

11. Distribution of GSA orders transmitting changes to the GSA delegations of authority directives.

a. ADM 5450 orders and change orders transmitting delegations of authority issued by the Administrator are electronically posted in the GSA Directives database in GSA InSite. A copy of the order must be distributed to the Office of General Counsel (L). A notice will be posted in the GSA Update to announce changes.

b. Orders transmitting redelegations of authority issued by the Head of a Service or Staff Office or Regional Administrators are electronically posted in the GSA Directives database and announced in

the GSA Update. With the exception of Delegations by the Inspector General, a copy of the notice and the redelegation must be distributed to the Office of General Counsel..

12. Publication in the Federal Register. Delegations of authority of interest to the public will be prepared in accordance with the instructions and guidance provided in the GSA Administrative Manual, ch. 1-11 (OAD P 5410.1), for publication in the Notices section of the Federal Register by the appropriate service or staff office. Determination of public interest will be made jointly by the service or staff office concerned and the Office of General Counsel. For Inspector General delegations, the determination will be made jointly by the Inspector General and the Office of Counsel to the Inspector General. The Head of the Central Office Service or Staff Office concerned must be furnished any delegation of authority that the Regional Administrator believes should be considered for publication in the Federal Register.